

News Release

Music, Dance, Food, and Fun All a Part of Fourth Annual "Fiesta in the Spirit of Cinco de Mayo" at the U of M, Crookston on Saturday, April 21, 2012; Event to Celebrate the Month of the Young Child

By Itollefs on Wednesday, March 28, 2012

A cultural celebration with something for everyone, the Fourth Annual "Fiesta in the Spirit of Cinco de Mayo" will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2012, at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. The day is filled with activities for the whole family and celebrates the rich tradition of the Mexican people. This year's fiesta also recognizes the Month of the Young Child with many activities focusing on children and families.



From 2-5 p.m., Children can choose from nearly a dozen arts and crafts activities in Bede Ballroom and the International Lounge in the Sargeant Student Center featuring more than 200 piñatas made by event volunteers this year. This important aspect of the Fiesta is led by Early Childhood Education (ECE) students, faculty, ECE program alumni, and Month of the Young Child volunteers. Games, music, and rhythm activities will take place in the International and Northern Lights lounges. Information booths, a scholarship table, and a mini marketplace will be located throughout the Sargeant Student Center and into the Eagle's Nest in the Sahlstrom Conference Center.

Music and a performance of an anti-bullying skit by True Players will also be part of the afternoon in the Prairie Room. Featured musical performers include both professional balladeers, Cathy and Abel Pineiro, and local talent Bryan Sanchez. Snacks for children will be available from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.



Folk dance classes, for those who have pre-registered, will be held in the Lysaker Gymnasium in the Sports Center on campus. The dance sessions will include age appropriate folk dance steps and begin at 2 p.m. for students in grades kindergarten through second grade; followed at 3 p.m. for students in third through sixth grades; and concluding with a session at 4 p.m. for students in grades seven through adult. For more information or to pre-register for a session, contact Anna Corona at 218-521-0245; Rosa Quiroz at 218-289-7479, or Rae French at 218-281-8339. News release on dance sessions.

Beginning at 4 p.m., there will be appetizers in the Eagles Nest and an authentic Mexican dinner will be served in Brown Dining Room from 4:30 until 7 p.m. featuring the talent of several area cooking experts including two all-time favorites: tamales and Mexican rice.

Following the dinner at 7 p.m., entertainment moves to Kiehle Auditorium for a performance by Los Alegres Bailadores, a dance troupe from St. Paul, Minn. Many of the dances will feature the younger members of the dance troupe to draw attention to the children who dance with Los Alegres Bailadores.

Another highlight of the evening will be the announcement regarding the progress of the Ramona Mendez Endowed Scholarship fund drive. The academic scholarship honors the memory of Ramona Mendez, a long time employee of UMC Facilities, whose son Kenneth is a graduate of the U of M, Crookston and a lead member of the planning committee. The scholarship was initiated during last year's "Fiesta in the Spirit of the Cinco de Mayo."

The evening concludes with a family dance from 8 to 12 p.m. in Bede Ballroom featuring Crookston's own VJ (video disc jockey) Nico from Z Martin Entertainment, playing Cumbia, Tejano, and Mexicano music and more. The goal of the Cinco de Mayo celebration at the U of M, Crookston is to promote learning, understanding, and appreciation for the Mexican culture through traditional Mexican entertainment, crafts, and cuisine.

The event is sponsored in part by a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council, which serves the seven counties located in the northwest corner of the state. The Arts Council receives funding from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment from the Minnesota State Legislature. Other sponsors include the Crookston Convention and Visitors Bureau; Northwest Mental Health Center; Tri-Valley Opportunity Council; RiverView Health; Crookston Police Benefit Association; and Concerts and Lectures; Diversity and Multicultural Affairs; the Coca Cola Community Initiative Fund; and the Department of Liberal Arts and Education, all at the U of M, Crookston.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 26 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 36 concentrations, including 10 online degrees, in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,600 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

In the photos: Children dancers from Los Alegres Bailadores, a dance troupe from St. Paul.

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